

Message Text

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PAGE 01 AMMAN 05947 01 OF 02 061920Z

46

ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-03 EUR-09 SAB-01 SAM-01 SSO-00

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INR-09 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-14 ACDA-09 AID-05 SR-02 ORM-01 SCCT-01 DRC-01 /081 W

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2641

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USMISSION USUN

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 AMMAN 5947

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

DEPARTMENT PASS BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, JO, XF

SUBJ: JORDAN ON THE EVE OF KISSINGER VISIT

1. SUMMARY: FOLLOWING SEPT 22 JORDANIAN ANNOUNCEMENT TO "FREEZE"
INVOLVEMENT IN MIDEAST NEGOTIATIONS IN WAKE OF TRIPARTITE
DECLARATION SUPPORTING PLO, JORDANIAN PUBLIC IS CONFUSED OVER
WHAT HAPPENS NEXT IN MIDEAST NEGOTIATIONS. DESPITE CURRENT TEM-
PORARY "FREEZE" KING HUSSEIN AND PM RIFAI APPEAR DETERMINED TO
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PAGE 02 AMMAN 05947 01 OF 02 061920Z

PRESS JORDANIAN-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS AND TO MOBILIZE PUBLIC

BACKING FOR THAT COURSE IN HOPES THEY WILL RECEIVE EGYPTIAN AND SYRIAN SUPPORT AT RABAT ARAB SUMMIT FOLLOWING SECRETARY'S TRIP. GOJ STILL SEES LAUNCHING OF JORDANIAN-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS AS TILTING SCALES IN FAVOR OF JORDAN IN CONTEXT WITH PLO OVER WEST BANK REPRESENTATION. NEVERTHELESS, PLO HAS GAINED SOME GROUND SINCE SYRIAN DISENGAGEMENT IN MAY AND PLO APPEARS ON VERGE OF MAKING ADDITIONAL SIGNIFICANT AND PERHAPS DECISIVE GAINS AT EXPENSE OF JORDAN IN FORTHCOMING ARAB SUMMIT AND UNGA SESSION. JORDAN WILL REQUIRE AT VERY LEAST FIRM BEHIND-SCENES AND SOME PUBLIC BACKING FROM EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA AND POSSIBLY ALSO FROM SYRIA TO WITHSTAND PLO OFFENSIVE AT ARAB SUMMIT AT RABAT. IN ADDITION, AT LEAST APPEARANCE OF PROGRESS IN JORDAN-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS WILL BE IMPORTANT. JORDANIANS SEE US SUPPORT AS SINGLE MOST SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN STARTING SUCH NEGOTIATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. GENERAL ATMOSPHERE IN JORDAN PRIOR TO SECRETARY'S IMPENDING VISIT IS ONE OF PUBLIC CONFUSION AND UNCERTAINTY OVER NEXT STEPS IN MIDEAST NEGOTIATIONS, PARTICULARLY CONCERNING FUTURE JORDANIAN ROLE. AMONG FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO PUBLIC CONFUSION ARE: LAPSE OF TIME SINCE LAST ARAB-ISRAELI AGREEMENT IN MAY, LONG SERIES OF CONSULTATIONS ON MIDEAST PROBLEM WITHOUT APPARENT DECISIVE OUTCOME, AND SEESAWING INTER-ARAB NEGOTIATIONS ON ROLES OF PLO AND JORDAN.

3. SEEMINGLY CONTRADICTORY EGYPTIAN POSITIONS REGARDING "PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION" ISSUE HAVE BEEN SINGLE MOST CONFUSING ASPECT. RECENT EGYPT-SYRIA-PLO TRIPARTITE COMMUNIQUE CREATED DISMAY IN JORDAN AND RESULTED IN DECISION TO "FREEZE" INVOLVEMENT IN MIDEAST NEGOTIATIONS. THIS DECISION IS STILL IN EFFECT AND WE BELIEVE IF JORDAN PUSHED HARD ENOUGH AT ARAB SUMMIT IT WILL BE CONTINUED. JORDANIANS HOWEVER ARE STILL ANXIOUS TO EXPLORE FULLY NEGOTIATION ISSUE DURING KISSINGER VISIT. THEY WOULD PREFER TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATING ROLE BUT AT MINIMUM SUCH WILL PROBABLY REQUIRE EVIDENCE OF BACKING BY EGYPT AND SYRIA AT ARAB SUMMIT BEFORE UNFREEZING CURRENT POSITION.

4. EVENTS OF PAST THREE WEEKS HAVE SEEMED PARTICULARLY DAMAGING TO JORDANIAN POSITION IN ARAB WORLD REGARDING ITS COMPETITION WITH PLO OVER WEST BANK REPRESENTATION. TRIPARTITE COMMUNIQUE
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PAGE 03 AMMAN 05947 01 OF 02 061920Z

WAS VIEWED HERE AS FURTHER EVIDENCE OF EGYPTIAN FICKLENESS TOWARDS JORDAN AND SADAT'S SUBSEQUENT ASSURANCE THAT IT STILL ABIDES BY SADAT-HUSSEIN ALEXANDRIA UNDERSTANDINGS HAVE ONLY SLIGHTLY RELIEVED THE SITUATION. WIDESPREAD PLO DIPLOMACY INSIDE AND OUTSIDE UNGA AIMING AT STRENGTHENING PLO'S INTERNATIONAL STATUS HAS INCREASED PUBLIC SENSE OF JORDANIAN ISOLATION. FINAL BLOW WAS WIDESPREAD ADVERSE PUBLICITY GIVEN TO SOUTH AFRICAN ARMS DEAL WHICH WILL UNDOUBTEDLY FURTHER CONSOLIDATE POSITION

OF PLO AS AGAINST JORDAN IN UNGA AND ELSEWHERE. MEANWHILE, ARAB SUMMIT AT RABAT THREATENS JORDAN WITH FURTHER DIFFICULT CONFRONTATIONS WITH PLO AND ITS MANY ARAB SUPPORTERS, AND FORTHCOMING UNGA DEBATE ON PALESTINIAN ISSUE PROMISES FURTHER DISCOMFITURE AS JORDAN ATTEMPTS TO STEER CAREFUL COURSE OF FIGHTING ITS OWN BATTLES WITH PLO WHILE AVOIDING AN OPEN BREAK WITH ARAB "CONSENSUS".

5. REGARDING ISRAEL, OVER 25 YEARS OF FRUSTRATION ON ARAB-ISRAELI QUESTION HAS CONDITIONED A DEEP-SEATED SKEPTICISM REGARDING ISRAELI INTENTIONS AND OVER PROSPECTS FOR PEACE. MOST JORDANIANS VIEW THE SYRIAN AND EGYPTIAN DISENGAGEMENT AS MERE "TRUCE STEPS". WHEREAS THEY SEE EVEN AN INTERIM STEP ON THE WEST BANK AS A REAL POLITICAL STEP -- A QUANTUM JUMP IN SIGNIFICANCE. MOST JORDANIANS DO NOT BELIEVE ISRAEL IS WILLING TO WITHDRAW FROM MOST OF PRE-1967 ARAB TERRITORIES. MANY WOULD LIKE TO BELIEVE, BUT BASICALLY DOUBT, THAT ANY FURTHER EXERCISE IN DIPLOMACY CAN CHANGE THIS SITUATION. THERE IS ALSO A DIEHARD GROUP OF "EAST BANK-FIRSTERS" AMONG ANTI-PALESTINIAN, TRADITIONAL EAST BANK SUPPORTERS OF KING WITH SOME INFLUENCE IN ARMY. THIS GROUP FEARS THAT WEST BANK INVOLVEMENT WILL ULTIMATELY ALLOW PALESTINIANS TO UNDERMINE EAST BANK STABILITY. ACCORDINGLY, THIS GROUP WOULD STRONGLY OBJECT TO ANY RE-ENTRY OF PLO-FEDAYEEN ELEMENTS INTO JORDAN. THESE EAST BANKERS ARE THEREFORE GENERALLY HAPPY TO ABANDON GOJ ROLE IN WEST BANK AND EXPRESS RELIEF WHEN ARAB CONSENSUS SEEMS TO BLOCK JORDANIAN ROLE, AS WITNESS THEIR APPROVAL OF JORDANIAN DECISION TO "FREEZE" INVOLVEMENT IN NEGOTIATIONS. THUS FAR HOWEVER THESE EAST BANK LOYALIST ELEMENTS MUTE THEIR CRITICISM WHEN KING MAKES DECISIVE POLICY DECISIONS REAFFIRMING JORDANIAN ROLE ON WEST BANK.

6. AT SAME TIME, MOST JORDANIANS, INCLUDING PALESTINIAN RESIDENTS HERE, WOULD WELCOME AN HONORABLE PEACE WITH ISRAEL AND WOULD

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 AMMAN 05947 01 OF 02 061920Z

LIKE SOMEHOW TO DISPOSE OF THIS PROBLEM BUT CANNOT IMAGINE HOW SETTLEMENT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED. AS EVIDENCED BY RECENT CAUTIOUS AND NONCOMMITTAL GOVERNMENT REACTION TO RABIN TV STATEMENT THAT TERRITORY CAN BE EXCHANGED FOR AN ARAB NONBELLIGERENCY STATEMENT, MANY JORDANIANS HAVE NO OBJECTION PER SE TO DECLARATION OF NON-BELLIGERANCY IN RETURN FOR FULL ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL TO PRE-1967 BORDERS. HOWEVER THEY ARE DUBIOUS OVER EXTENT OF ISRAELI TERRITORIAL CONCESSIONS AS QUID PRO QUO. IN SUM, PREVAILING PUBLIC MOOD IS MIXTURE OF CONFUSION AND SKEPTICISM REGARDING NEXT STEP IN MIDEAST NEGOTIATIONS, WHILE GRIMLY RECOGNIZING AT SAME TIME THAT RENEWAL OF ARAB-ISRAELI WAR IS POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCE OF BREAKDOWN IN PEACE NEGOTIATIONS DURING COMING MONTHS. OFFICIALS, HOWEVER, SEE SOME SIGNS OF HOPE IN APPARENT FLEXIBLE STATEMENTS FROM ISRAEL WHICH SEEM TO MUTE OR DROP PRIOR DEMANDS THAT WEST BANK COULD ONLY BE CONSIDERED IN A FINAL PEACE SETTLEMENT AND

THAT INITIAL STEIPS WERE RULED OUT. SKEPTICISM CERTAINLY REMAINS ABOUT RABIN'S MAPS AND WHAT THEY CONTAIN, BUT FACT THAT HE IS TALKING ABOUT THEM IS CONSIDERED TO BE A POSITIVE STEP. SOME THINK THERE IS ALMOST A QUIET CONSPIRACY IN WHICH ISRAELIS SEEM TO RECOGNIZE THAT AS PLO GAINS UPPER HAND IN INTER-ARAB COUNCILS, ISRAELIS MUST DO SOMETHING TO KEEP JORDANIANS IN THE GAME.

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PAGE 01 AMMAN 05947 02 OF 02 061934Z

46

ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 IO-03 ISO-00 EUR-09 SAB-01 SAM-01 SSO-00

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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2642

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USMISSION USUN

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 AMMAN 5947

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7. NEVERTHELESS, ON OFFICIAL LEVEL, JORDAN IN PAST WEEK HAS

MODERATED ITS NEGATIVE "FREEZE" POSTURE ON NEGOTIATIONS AND IS NOW
CONDITIONING PUBLIC OPINION POSITIVELY IN PREPARATION FOR
SECRETARY'S FORTHCOMING TRIP. IN RECENT DAYS JORDAN HAS TAKEN BIT
BETWEEN ITS TEETH AND IN EFFECT PROCLAIMED ITS WILLINGNESS IN
PRINCIPLE TO CONTINUE TO URSUE POSSIBLE NEGOTIATIONS WITH
ISRAEL OVER WEST BANK. KEYNOTE WAS KING'S OCTOBER 2 SPEECH BEFORE
THIRD DIVISION REMINDING ARMY OF JORDAN'S "SACRED DUTY" TO REGAIN
LOST TERRITORIES AND IMPLYING JORDANIANS DETERMINATION NOT TO
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PAGE 02 AMMAN 05947 02 OF 02 061934Z

ABANDON NEGOTIATIONS. CONSIDERING EAST BANK ISOLATIONIST INFLU-
ENCE AND ANTI-WEST BANK SENTIMENTS IN SOME ARMY QUARTERS, SPEECH
WAS GRITTY AND DECISIVE PERFORMANCE BY KING. OTHER RECENT
MEASURES INCLUDE ENCOURAGING PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT
FOR JORDAN ROLE IN REPRESENTING INTERESTS OF PALESTINIANS ON
WEST BANK, FROM PALESTINIAN REFUGEE CAMPS IN JORDAN AND BY FRIEND-
LY PALESTINIANS IN WEST BANK AND GAZA. MEANWHILE, TEMPERED GOJ
PUBLIC RESPONSE TO RABIN WITHDRAWAL-FOR-NONBELLIGERANCY
STATEMENT ON NBC "TODAY SHOW" CONVEYS IMPRESSION OF JORDANIAN
DESIRE TO KEEP NEGOTIATING DOOR OPEN WITH ISRAEL.

8. DESPITE RECENT REVERSES VIS-A-VIS PLO, BASIC OFFICIAL BELIEF
HERE IS STILL THAT OF JORDANIAN-ISRAELI NEGOTIAT-
IONS WILL TILT SCALES IN FAVOR OF JORDAN IT ITS CONTEST WITH PLO
REGARDING WEST BANK. ACCORDINGLY, OFFICIALS CONTEND THAT DELAYS
IN STARTING NEGOTIATIONS ARE WORKING IN PLO FAVOR AND THAT TIME
FOR JORDAN IS RUNNING OUT, PARTICULARLY WITH UNGA DEBATE AND ARAB
SUMMIT ON HORIZON. IN MORE SANGUINE MOMENTS, JORDANIANS DOWNPLAY
ULTIMATE STRENGTH AND VITALITY OF PLO. THEY ASSERT THAT JORDANIAN-
ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS WILL BRING ABOUT COLLAPSE OF SERIOUS PLO
COMPETITION AS SEPARATE FORCE (AS OPPOSED TO ITS INFLATED IMAGE
AS GENERATED BY ARAB AND INTERNATIONAL PRESS) AND WILL HOPE-
FULLY ACHIEVE ABSORPTION OF MODERATE PLO ELEMENTS WITHIN A
GROUPING MORE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ASPIRATIONS OF ALL PALES-
TINIANS AND MORE CONGENIAL TO FRIENDLY ASSOCIATION WITH JORDAN
(AND WITH ISRAEL).

JORDANIANS SAY ONLY WAY TO TEST THESE ASSUMPTIONS IS BY
LAUNCHING JORDANIAN-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS. TRAUMA OF 1970-71 WAR
WITH FEDAYEEN IS STILL PRESENT AND JORDAN IS CONVINCED IT MUST
DEAL WITH PLO THROUGH POSITION OF STRENGTH. INTERNAL SECURITY
AGAINST FEDAYEEN SUBVERSION IS GOOD AND JORDAN WISHES TO ACHIEVE
SIMILAR LEG UP IN ITS EXTERNAL POSITION BY GETTING WEST BANK
NEGOTIATIONS UNDERWAY.

8. JORDAN'S DILEMMA IN ACHIEVING THIS OBJECTIVE ARISES FROM
ITS NEED FOR SUPPORT FROM ARAB MODERATES, PARTICULARLY EGYPT AND
SAUDI ARABIA, AND ALSO TO SOME EXTENT FROM SYRIA. IT REMAINS
SUSPICIOUS PARTICULARLY OF EGYPT, BUT RECOGNIZES IT REQUIRES
EGYPTIAN SUPPORT AND SYRIAN ACQUIESCENCE FOR ANY STEPS IT TAKES
IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL. SECURING EGYPTIAN SUPPORT REQUIRES

EXERCISE OF SOME FORBEARANCE IN ADMITTEDLY INCONSISTENT AND THUS
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PAGE 03 AMMAN 05947 02 OF 02 061934Z

FAR UNSUCCESSFUL EGYPTIAN ATTEMPTS SOMEHOW TO FORGE A
JORDANIAN-PLO ACCOMMODATION. SADAT'S PLETHORA OF REASSURING MESS-
AGES AS A RESULT OF "FREEZE" LEADS JORDANIANS TO CONTINUE TO
BELIEVE THAT THEIR TRUMP CARDS ARE TIED UP IN FACT THAT ONLY
JORDAN -- AND NOT THE PLO -- CAN PROBABLY GET "SOMETHING"
ON WEST BANK AND THAT THEY CAN ALWAYS "OPT OUT" TEMPORARILY
TO DRIVE HOME THEIR POINT. FOR MOMENT AT LEAST, JORDANIAN RE-
LATIONS WITY SYRIA ARE Surer AND MORE STRAIGHTFORWARD THAN
JORDANIAN-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS, DESPITE GREATER IDEOLOGICAL DIFF-
ERENCES AND STRONGER SYRIAN SUPPORT FOR PLO.

9. MOST DIFFICULT CURRENT ISSUE IS INTER-ARAB ATTEMPT TO FORGE
SOME COMPROMISE ON JORDAN-PLO CONTEST OVER PALESTINIAN AND WEST
BANK REPRESENTATION. LATEST JORDANIAN ATTEMPT TO EXPLAIN TO ITS
PUBLIC ITS ADMITTEDLY SELF-SERVING INTERPRETATION OF CURRENT STATE
OF EGYPTIAN-JORDANIAN-SYRIAN UNDERSTANDING WAS EXPRESSED OCTOBER
4 IN AMMAN DAILY AL DUSTOUR GOVERNMENT-INSPIRED EDITORIAL WHICH
OUTLINED FOLLOWING FOUR "PRINCIPLES"

A) JORDAN HAS BASIC ROLE IN NEGOTIATIONS AND ITS POSITION
MUST BE RESTORED PRIOR TO FORTHCOMING ROUND ANTICIPATED TO
OCCUR DURING KISSINGER TRIP AND AFTER;

B) IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE TO REACH COMPROMISE AND COOPERATION
BETWEEN PLO AND ALL THREE CONFRONTATION STATES, DESPITE
STUBBORN DIFFERENCES;

C) CURRENT EFFORTS CENTER ON FINDING SUITABLE DEFINITION OF A
PALESTINIAN NATIONAL AUTHORITY WHICH SOME MEDIATORS (IE, GOJ)
CONTENTEND DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN THE AUTHORITY OF THE PLO.
(COMMENT: WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT GOJ FULLY APPROVES CONCEPT OF
A PALESTINIAN NATIONAL AUTHORITY, SINCE GOJ POSITION CALLS FOR
SELF-DETERMINATION FOLLOWING JORDANIAN RE-ACQUISITION OF WEST
BANK FOLLOWING ANY ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL).

D) RECOGNITION BY SOME ARAB COUNTRIES OF PLO AS SOLE REPRESENTA-
TIVE OF THE PALESTINIANS HAS NO PRACTICAL OPERATIONAL EFFECT
AND HENCE DOES NOT PROHIBIT EXERCISE OF JORDANIAN ROLE IN NEGO-
TIATIONS.

10. NOTWITHSTANDING THE OBVIOUS INTERNAL CONTRADICTIONS IN
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PAGE 04 AMMAN 05947 02 OF 02 061934Z

ABOVE POSITIONS, THEY ARE BEST INTERPRETATION JORDAN CAN MAKE OF ITS CONTINUING DISCUSSIONS WITH SYRIA AND EGYPT. IT HOWEVER REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER THIS IS SAME INTERPRETATION EGYPT AND SYRIA WILL MAKE OF THESE TALKS. JORDAN IS AWARE HOWEVER THAT ARAB SUMMIT AND TO LESSER EXTENT UNGA DEBATE ARE CRUCIAL HURDLES IN PATH OF PROGRESS IN JORDANIAN NEGOTIATIONS FOR WHICH EGYPTIAN AND WE ASSUME ALSO SYRIAN HELP WILL BE NECESSARY TO CLEAR.

11. THE BIG QUESTION MARK IN GOJ EYES REMAINS WHETHER EGYPT AND SYRIA WILL SUPPORT JORDAN AT THE SUMMIT SUFFICIENTLY TO ALLOW IT TO PROCEED TO NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL. CURRENTLY, JORDANIANS ARE SAYING THAT BACKING HAS TO BE CLEAR CUT AND CONCRETE OR THEY WILL OPT OUT. WE DO NOT EXCLUDE POSSIBILITY THEY WILL ACCEPT SOME VAGUER FORMULA UNDER EGYPTIAN AND EVEN SYRIAN PRESSURE. IF HOWEVER SOME ARAB BACKING IS FORTHCOMING, KING HUSSEIN APPEARS DETERMINED TO PERSEVERE IN NEGOTIATIONS DESPITE:

(A) TRADITIONAL RELUCTANCE FROM BASICALLY EAST BANK, LOYALIST ELEMENTS IN JORDAN, (B) SERIOUS OPPOSITION FROM PLO AND ITS SUPPORTERS IN ARAB WORLD AND INTERNATIONALLY, AND (C) UNCERTAINTY OVER NOT ONLY OUTCOME OF ANY NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL BUT ALSO OVER ULTIMATE EGYPTIAN AND SYRIAN POSITIONS. IN A SENSE CURRENT TRIP AND ITS ARAB-ISRAELI ASPECTS PLAYS AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF THE CRUCIAL INTER-ARAB SUMMIT TO FOLLOW IT. IT IS APPARENT THAT JORDAN REMAINS IN POSITION OF CRITICAL DEPENDENCE ON CONTINUED U.S. SUPPORT, NOT ONLY IN GETTING NEGOTIATIONS STARTED WITH ISRAEL BUT ALSO IN THE DIFFICULT CONSULTATIONS THAT WILL ENSUE BETWEEN THE ARAB STATES.
PICKERING

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